

I. Heading

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



281356

Date: February 11, 1992

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Subject: Pollution report for Great Lakes Steel (Emergency  
Response)

POLREP # 01

II. BACKGROUND:

Site No:  
Delivery Order No.:  
Response Authority: 311  
CERCLA Incident Category:  
NPL Status: NO  
Start Date: 2/7/92

III. RESPONSE INFORMATION:

A) Situation

U.S. Coast Guard, District 9 (MSO Detroit) reported an oil spill and fish kill at Great Lakes Steel Corporation, 1 Quality Drive, Ecorse, Wayne County, Michigan to the U.S. EPA on morning of February 7, 1992. The TAT was mobilized to conduct a site assessment and arrived on-site in early afternoon.

During the site investigation, TAT members witnessed the presence of several dead fish and visible oil sheen in the area just down river from the plant's process water discharge. A network of oil booms and sorbent pads are positioned at this discharge to help remove the sheen prior to release into open waters. The dead fish and oil sheen were present in the area contained by the booms.

Investigating the downriver shoreline, TAT found one fish on the bank and two others floating in the water. One of the fish was distressed, swimming on its side in a tight circular pattern. No sheen or signs of a recent oil release were

found. None of the fish were saturated with oil. The shoreline is contaminated with oil from past release and a sheen emanates when the soil is even mildly disturbed.

An inspection of the facility's four (4) settling ponds, where water having direct contact with the steel forming processes and floor drain effluent is collected prior to discharge, had oil sheen present on its surfaces and substantial oil contamination in the soil along the shorelines. Oil booms and sorbents were positioned at the overwiers/outfall of each pond to remove the visible sheen.

#### B) Actions Taken

- o TAT requested laboratory data collected by Great Lakes Steel on discharge effluent grease/oil content and pH, as required by their discharge permit, during the time frame of the fish kill. Any information regarding the temperature and the flow rate of the effluent was also requested.
- o An overview of existing and planned programs by Great Lakes Steel to eliminate oil emissions from this facility was requested by TAT.
- o TAT conducted a follow-up visit with OSC Robert Bowlus on 2/10/92. Inspected outfall, retention ponds, non-contact process water treatment area, and received discharge permit analytical test results for the time period of interest. Flow rates for effluent are recorded by Great Lakes Steel, but were unavailable at the time of the site visit. This information will be made available to TAT.

#### C) Next Steps

- o Robert Bowlus has assumed OSC duties for this site and will be monitoring Great Lakes Steel's progress in addressing the situation at its process water outfall.

#### D) Key Issues

The fish involved in the kill were identified as shad. This type of fish is highly sensitive to temperature fluctuations and can die under temperature shifts of as little as ten (10) degrees fahrenheit. At the time of the fish kill, the Great Lakes Steel facility was in a 32 hour down time period and was discharging a much reduced amount of water into the Detroit river. Fish living in the thermal plume from the plant's process water outfall would be therefore subjected to the ambient water conditions in the Detroit river.

### III. COST INFORMATION

Thru 2/11/92

	BUDGETED	ESTIMATED COST TO DATE
TAT		2230.00
EPA DIRECT		300.00
EPA INDIRECT		530.00
TOTAL		3060.00